THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

[ESTABLISHED 1840].

"The fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him: but the desire of the righteous shall be granted" (PROVERBS 10 : 27).

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OUR DUTY TO GOD, TO HUMANITY, AND TO COUNTRY.

OPENING ADDRESS BY PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH AT THE EIGHTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE CHURCH, APRIL 6TH, 1917.

(Continued from page 357).

Fathers and mothers in Israel, will you try to teach your children that there is no other name given under heaven by which we have such a glorious hope of the resurrection from death to life, or assurance in the principle and promise of eternal exaltation in the kingdom of God but that of Jesus Christ, the Son of God? We are a Christian people, we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and we feel that it is our duty to acknowledge him as our Savior and Redeemer. Teach it to your children. Teach them that the Prophet Joseph Smith restored again to the earth the priesthood that was held by Peter and James and John, who were ordained under the hands of the Savior Himself. Teach them that Joseph Smith, the Prophet, when only a boy, was chosen and called of God to lay the foundations of the Church of Christ in the world, to restore the holy priesthood, and the ordinances of the gospel which are necessary to qualify men to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Teach your children to respect their neighbors. Teach your children to respect their bishops and the teachers that come to their homes to teach them. Teach your children to respect old age, gray hairs, and feeble frames. Teach them to venerate and hold in honorable remembrance their parents, and help all those who are helpless and needy. Teach your children, as you have been taught yourselves, to honor the priesthood, which you hold, the priesthood which we hold as elders in Israel. Teach your children to honor themselves, teach your children to honor the principle of presidency by which organizations are held intact, and by which strength and power for the wellbeing and happiness

and upbuilding of the people is preserved. Teach your children that when they go to school they should honor their teachers in that which is true and honest, in that which is manly and womanly and is worth while; and also teach them to avoid the bad examples of their teachers out of school and the bad principles of men and women who are sometimes teachers in schools. Teach your children to honor the law of God and the law of the state, and the law of our country. Teach them to respect and hold in honor those who are chosen by the people to stand at their head and execute justice and administer the law. Teach them to be loyal to their country, loyal to righteousness and uprightness and honor, and thereby they will grow up to be men and women choice above all the men and women of the world.

And as Latter-day Saints, as members of the Church of Jesus Christ, do not forget those ordinances of the gospel which require proper recognition in order that we may be placed unexceptionably before the Lord. The Lord has revealed to us a principle by which, by the proper and righteous exercise of divine authority, we may be joined together for time and all eternity. Teach your children that principle, that they may live worthy to go and receive the benefits and blessings of these ordinances. Teach your children and let yourselves be taught the fact that it is necessary for you to become saviors upon Mount Zion for those who have died without the knowledge of the gospel, and that the temples of God in these mountains, and that are being reared in other lands, have been built and are designed expressly for the performance of these sacred ordinances which are necessary for those who have passed away without them. Do not forget these things. Keep them in mind, for they are necessary for us.

There are many things that might be said, but I do not want to weary you. I want to bear my testimony. I have served from my youth up along with such men as Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Willard Richards, George A. Smith, Jedediah M. Grant, Daniel H. Wells, John Taylor, George Q. Cannon, and Wilford Woodruff and his associates, and Lorenzo Snow and his associates, the members of the twelve apostles, the seventies and the high priests in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, for more than sixty years; and, that my word may be heard by every stranger within the sound of my voice, I want to testify to you that better men than these have never lived, within the range of my acquaintance. I can so testify because I was familiar with these men, grew up from babyhood with them, associated with them in council, in prayer, and supplication, and in travel from settlement to settlement through our country here and crossing the plains. I have heard them in private and in public, and I bear my testimony to you that they were men of God, true men, pure men, God's noblemen; virtuous men who never were either tempted to do evil or tempted others to do wrong, men whose examples and whose

lives were above reproach, except in what corrupt, wicked or ignorant men supposed they saw and presumed to denounce as wrong in them. It was a crime in the eyes of lecherous scoundrels that President Young should have more wives than one. But they were his wives and he honored them and their children, and fed, clothed and educated them. He did not desert, nor abuse, nor abandon them; and because of this, extremely pious people and others have condemned him. Some of the rest of us have come under similar condemnation. I know that this was a true principle with them and that they did not sin, because they did not do violence to anybody; neither did they wrong anybody; but that is a thing of the past. Others have complained and do complain because certain men, who were fortunate enough to have families when the people of the state capitulated with the government of the United States, and President Woodruff announced the discontinuance of plural marriages, have taken care of their wives and their children that were left with them. I want to tell you just once more, and would tell it before all the world if I could, that I believe with all my heart, that if any man ought to be damned in this world, it is the man that will abandon the mother of his children. We do not do it, we will not do it, the Lord Almighty helping us not to do it. Now, pardon me for digressing so far from the thought that was first in my mind.

I bear my testimony to you that no man has ever yet been able, so far as it is recorded in history, to bring to pass an organization like that of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as it was organized by Joseph Smith, the boy prophet. I testify that Joseph Smith revealed anew, and, so to speak, re-enacted the gospel of Jesus Christ, and nothing else, even including the injunction of the Master, "If ye were Abraham's seed, ye would do the works of Abraham."

I accept Jesus of Nazareth as the only begotten Son of God in the flesh. This is a great principle, though it seems hard for some people to understand it—those who believe in the foolish notion that God is a "vapor," if you please, ether, electricity, "energy" or anything else you might call Him or it, and that He fills the immensity of space, is everywhere present at the same time, etc., etc. It is difficult indeed for those who believe this foolish doctrine to believe that Christ could be the Son of God; that God, being only spirit, or "energy," as defined by a certain learned preacher, could beget a Son in "his own likeness" and "image," and the Son also be in the likeness and image of mortal man. The apostles of Jesus Christ, His witnesses, declare it, and He Himself has declared it by his own voice in the day in which we live; but it is hard to get people to understand how that nondescript creation of man's ignorance called God by the sectarian world, which fills the immensity of space and is everywhere present at the same time, can beget a son in the form of Himself and at the

same time in the form of man. But when they hear the truth, as it was revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith, by Christ Himself, and as it is revealed in the testimony of the ancient Scriptures, that God "created man in his own likeness, in his own image, male and female created he them," it is hard to get men to understand that Almighty God, who possesses all knowledge, all wisdom, and all power, can extend His power, His Spirit, His majesty and glory and dominion over all His creations, while He Himself sits upon His throne—it is hard to make them understand it, and yet that is the truth. We want to teach those principles to our children, and inculcate the teaching of the same things to our children's children to the latest generation, that they may grow up in the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ, whom He has sent unto the world, whom to know is life eternal.

I will give way to my brethen to speak as the Spirit may impress them, but, before I conclude, I have had jotted down a few statements of facts which I presume will be interesting, at least to those present at this conference.

As you know, for the last sixty-odd years the Church has had its headquarters in the little old buildings which were erected by President Brigham Young, away back in the early fifties, and which at the time served the purpose very well, and have continued to do so until now; still, they have become worn with age, and not quite in keeping with the progress of other things. A couple of years ago we determined to construct a building which would afford office room for our various organizations. Previously, however, a very creditable building had been erected for the Presiding Bishopric, and for the Relief Societies and other organizations of the Church. But we decided that we would build a house that would furnish suitable accommodations for the Presidency and others, and at the same time would be a monument of the real character of the work in which we are engaged. I am happy to say that we have practically completed it, although we have been delayed on account of the lack of facility on the part of some of those who have contracted to furnish material with which to complete the adornment of the walls. We are waiting for marble. I am pleased to say that we have used, in the adornment of the interior walls of our building, as far as it was possible, home materials—marble and onyx and precious stones that exist in great abundance in Utah, and it is therefore practically a homemade building. There has been expended for the erection and equipment of the new Church Office Building, $864,562.

There has been expended, up to date, on the erection of the new temple at Cardston, Alberta, Canada, $209,668, and it is still in process of erection.

There has been expended in the erection of the temple in the Hawaiian Islands, and which will be completed during the current year, $50,520.

There has been paid out of the tithes during the year 1916 for the support of the missions, $13,610. In addition to this, property has been purchased in Brooklyn, New York, and a mission house erected thereon, which has cost the Church $51,802.

The Church has purchased mission property in the South African Mission during the year which has cost $9,333.

The Church has purchased, also, additional real estate adjoining our mission property at Independence, Missouri, at a cost of $5,000.

We have paid for a new chapel in St. Louis, Missouri, $6,400. In the year 1915, the Thomas D. Dee Memorial Hospital, of Ogden, was transferred to the Church, and since that time there has been expended for its maintenance and erection of a beautiful nurses' home $33,587.

During the year 1916 the Church has contributed toward the erection of ward and stake meeting houses, $177,736.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

WHY I LEFT THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

(*Concluded from page 359*).

In conclusion, I desire to bear my testimony to the truth of the gospel. I know that the message delivered to us by the elders of the Church is true. I know that it came to the Prophet Joseph by revelation from God. When I first heard it, the "Mormons" were considered a bad lot. I was told that they lived in Salt Lake City and that the place was walled in, so that when you once got in, there was no possible chance of escaping. I also heard that all Utah letters were read and censored by the President of the Church, so that no one could give his friends any information about the conditions there. It was also said that they sent their emissaries to every country, especially to Scotland, to steal away young women and take them to Salt Lake for sinister purposes. I was born and brought up in Airdrie, Lanarkshire, Scotland, but I made it my business to go to Salt Lake City and some other places in Utah, and to visit the "Mormons" and investigate for myself. What could anybody do, more than I did, to find out the truth about the people and their religion? I visited their homes, to see how they were conducted, and what I saw filled me with admiration. How many of our best people in Britain attend to their family prayers? How many parents here are in the habit of gathering their children around the fireside and instructing them in the principles of life and salvation? I make bold to say that they are few. In "Mormon" homes this is a common practice.

As for Salt Lake City being surrounded with a wall—well, I believe most people have given up that silly idea now, although I have heard it since I came back to Scotland. Well, as I said, I have been there and I have come back, and, as a matter of fact, I

did not see anything to "escape" from. Nobody wanted to detain me, or anybody else. The idea is preposterous.

Salt Lake City is a centre of commerce and population, just like Glasgow, Edinburgh, Liverpool, Birmingham, or any other big city, with equal freedom. There, as elsewhere, you can do as you like, within the law. I attended their meetings, and I know all about their mode of worship. They are a very devout people, and they practise what they preach. In this you will find a marked contrast between them and many of the people of the so-called Christian world. They did not practice plural marriage; neither did they preach it.

Let me say, further, that if you could see the women in Utah and Wyoming, as I have seen them, you would know that there was no need for the men in those States to go anywhere else for good, faithful wives. Besides, did it never strike you that it would be almost impossible for anybody to take away women from this country, for evil purposes, year after year, for fifty years, or more, as it has been said that the "Mormon" missionaries have done? What about our detective system? Scotland Yard is not always asleep.

As I have said before, I have lived with the "Mormon" people, and attended their meetings; I have also worked with them; I have enjoyed myself in the meetings of their Mutual Improvement associations and other auxiliary organizations of the Church, and I can testify that the vile stories told about the "Mormons" are falsehoods. Many of them are invented by enemies who fear neither God nor man, and they are circulated for various selfish purposes. There is no greater proof that I can give you of what I have stated concerning the "Mormons" than by adding that since I came back home, it has been my greatest desire to live up to the teachings of the Latter-day Saints, and to see all those who are near and dear to me do likewise. Does any one think that I would ask my children to believe a lie? Would you, if you knew it? Then learn the truth about "Mormonism" and save yourself and your children as well.

Again I testify that the gospel is true. I realize that God will hold me responsible for every idle deed and word, on that great day, when He shall reward every man according to his works; nevertheless I say in all earnestness that if "Mormonism" is not true, there is no truth on earth.

JAMES GRAHAM.

THE question is asked, "Why are we under obligation to follow counsel?" Because that counsel possesses those qualities necessary to make us better here, and to exalt us to honor and glory hereafter. If it were not so, there would be no obligation on our part to follow counsel.—LORENZO SNOW.

TWO NEWSPAPER ARTICLES COMPARED.

BROTHER GEORGE EASTER, of Liverpool, some time ago sent a communication to the *Sunday Chronicle*, commenting on an anti-"Mormon" article which appeared in that paper at the time. After stating that a friend had handed him a copy of the *Chronicle*, in which he found two contributions—one by Mr. Robert Blatchford, on "War and Self-defence," and one by another contributor on the "Lure of the Mormon," Brother Easter writes, in part:

"Now, sir, although there is not at first sight the remotest connection between the two articles, yet, to me they give greater interest as a combination of ideas, because one supplies me with material for explaining my view-point about the other.

"I read Robert Blatchford many years ago; yes, 'Nunquam' is an old friend. He knew the 'German' question, and he knew best how to tell it to others. But what of that, if the people were not inclined to believe him? Blatchford is a giant, and he can now look us square in the face and say, 'I told you the truth.'

"What about the author of 'Lure of the Mormon?' Does he know his subject, as Blatchford knew his? I doubt it. Does he think that, twenty years hence, he will be able to look us all in the face and say, 'I told you the truth?' I doubt it. Can he show us one honest seeker after truth, who was an anti-'Mormon' twenty years ago, and has lived among the Latter-day Saints all the time since then, and still retains his anti-'Mormon' animosity? I believe that if the anonymous writer were to live among the so-called 'Mormons' the next twenty years, instead of being able to say, 'I warned you of your danger twenty years ago,' he would be ashamed to acknowledge that he ever wrote such twaddle.

"I was an anti-'Mormon' once. This was thirty years ago. I claim to know something about the 'Mormons.' For seventeen years I have been a member of the Church I once hated, and I have never regretted the change. I have a wife and three daughters, whose purity I value more than life. I have sons also, whose virtue is as dear to me as that of my daughters, and I know of no place on earth, where the morals of my children can be better safeguarded, or where their strength to resist encroachments on their purity can be more surely developed, than in the 'Mormon' Church."

THE man who lives his life cheerfully without complaint rises steadily in the scale of happiness and strength, while the grumbler slips a notch downward each day and at the last lies flat on his back in the slough of despond. The funny thing about it is that we actually worry most over troubles that never come.—SELECTED.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

THURSDAY, JUNE 14, 1917.

EDITORIAL.

WHY MEN DO NOT GO TO CHURCH.

FOR some time a discussion has been carried on in the *Christian Work*, an American religious weekly, on the question why men do not go to church. Many letters have appeared, some from clergymen, some from laymen; some from believers, and some from doubters.

It is for many reasons a very interesting symposium. It deals with a practical subject which is uppermost in the minds of many thinking men and women engaged in church work. It is a question upon the correct understanding of which depends the future religious status of the Christian world. To us it has a special interest, because the answers that are being given prove that God, in sending the gospel again, in this age, to the children of men, gave them an infallible remedy for the very evils that are now acknowledged to exist as a menace to Christian thought and life. The gospel proclaimed through the instrumentality of the Prophet Joseph and his followers anticipated the present conditions. The Prophet, like all great reformers, was ahead of his time. His work was, in every sense of the word, prophetic. This is evident from the discussion referred to.

Here are a few extracts from the letters.

One correspondent says, "We must stand in truth, removing the traditions that have made void the teachings of Jesus."

Could the message of the Prophet Joseph have been expressed with greater clearness in so few words? What is "Mormonism" but a call to all who profess to be Christians to take their stand on the firm rock of truth and, loyal to the Lord Jesus, discard all false traditions that make His teachings void?

The author of the excerpt quoted is right in assuming that if preachers would speak the divine truth in the pulpits, the church attendance would be more satisfactory. The Prophet Joseph did never lack an audience when it was known that he would address the saints. At one open-air meeting rain began to fall. But the audience did not disperse. Thousands stood and listened in spite of the storm. There is a power in divine truth which draws the hearts of men, as the magnet the iron, when they come under its influence.

One of the contributors to the symposium says he has a large acquaintance among scholars, professional, and business men,

who talk freely to him of the reasons why they neglect to go to church, and nearly all of them say that they stay away because they do not believe the doctrines taught concerning the fall, the redemption, man's recent origin on earth, etc. They prefer to believe that man has developed from beastly savagery to his present "high estate," and that the development continues. They, further, believe that, in spite of the claim of church people that they are "converted," they are no better than others. They are ashamed of the doctrine of an eternal hell and of the charge that the purpose of the Almighty is to consign to that place of torture all who do not believe in certain propositions, most of which are unbelievable.

These are some things in this communication which cannot but set one to thinking. In the first place, it is a fact that modern so-called scientific speculation has a tendency to draw the hearts of men away from God, although some good men and women fail to realize this. If man is but an improved lower animal, there has been no fall; there is no sin, and there can be no redemption. If man is not an eternal being, there can be no life after this, and no resurrection. Why, then, go to church? If the church is but a human institution, it is not worthy of support. This is, indisputably, the barren goal toward which many exponents of certain modern ideas of the origin of man, and their easy-going followers are traveling. But now comes the gospel of our Lord with salvation from this error and its spiritual dangers, by revealing to us the divine origin of man. For the gospel teaches us that, no matter what scientists may have to say concerning that part of man which is of "earth earthy," and which at death turns to "dust" again, our spirits are the offspring of God, and they will dwell, throughout all eternity, in resurrected, glorified bodies, fashioned in the likeness of the Father and the Son, if they here live so that they are found worthy of eternal exaltation. The Prophet Joseph fully understood this truth, when he said. "There is no fundamental principle belonging to a human system that ever goes into another in this world or the world to come: I care not what the theories of men are. * * * If any one suppose that any part of our bodies, that is, the fundamental parts thereof, ever goes into another body, he is mistaken." The gospel meets fairly and squarely the falsely so-called philosophy, and gives us the truth on this important question.

Another contributor complains of the attitude of the church toward the laboring masses. He says, the church has no solution for the oppression and misery endured by that class, except a promise of heaven hereafter.

There is, unfortunately, a great deal of truth in this criticism. But here again, the gospel, as given us through the Prophet Joseph, offers a full and perfect solution of all the problems presented by the intricate labor problems. In one of the early

Revelations to the Church, the Lord said, "It is not given that one man should possess that which is above another, wherefor the world lieth in sin" (Doc. and Cov. 49: 20). The remedy offered was the wonderful organization known, in the history of the Church, as the United Order. According to the principles of this organization, each member should convey to the community all the property in his, or her, possession. By such conveyances all the property was held in common. There were no rich and no poor. All had an equal interest in everything of value. Then the community would turn over to each member a certain portion of the common property—be it a farm, a workshop, a mill—to be held by him, or her, as a "stewardship," to be in the possession of the individual, but to be used for the benefit of all; all gains reverting to a common fund, or store, whence each member, as a "steward," was to derive his, or her, support. All should labor diligently, and the fruits of the labor of all should be held for the benefit of all. Such was, briefly stated, the plan of the gospel of Jesus Christ for the solution of the labor question. But the Prophet was martyred and the saints were driven out into the wilderness, before its practicability could be tested. The time will yet come, however, when the children of men, taught by the Lord, will apply the principles of the United Order to business affairs of every kind, and then no class will have reason to complain of oppression. It is a lamentable fact that the churches of the world have utterly failed to insist on the application of the teachings of Jesus to every-day life and business transactions. That is one reason why God raised up His prophets in our day, to call the world to repentance.

Another contributor to the discussion calls attention to the fact that the clergymen, as a rule, do not speak from their own experience. They are not, he thinks, practical men. They have not sufficient knowledge of, or sympathy with, other men's lives, to enter into their problems intelligently.

Here again the objection is fully met by the organization of the Church. In the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints there is no priest class that stands out separate from the people. There is no "hierarchy." The officers of the Church are all of the people. They know by experience what labor is. They know what the toilers need, and can speak to them, in the pulpit or elsewhere, as brothers to brothers. They are farmers, or mechanics, or merchants, or lawyers, or literary men, or teamsters, or carpenters, etc., and they earn their living by their own efforts. The Lord has, in His infinite wisdom, so ordained it that His ministers shall be competent to lead and guide His people through the difficulties of every-day life. Our Lord Himself was a carpenter. Some of His first Apostles were fishermen. Paul was a tent-maker. The same arrangement obtains now. Joseph Smith knew, from early childhood, what hard toil on a farm was. Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, the Pratts, and other Church leaders, were hardened

and trained in the school of labor, before they were called to lead the Church, and they could interest the people on how to build a house, how to make the soil productive, and how to beautify a city, as well as on how to live moral lives. The Lord knew the defects of the ministry of the churches of the world, and He safeguarded His Church against falling into the same errors.

Another contributor finds fault with the congregation instead of with the clergymen. He, too, it seems to us, strikes a chord that gives a true note. Let us quote this paragraph:

"Laymen fail to regard the church as a great co-operative enterprise. No one man can do these things which are demanded of a modern church—even though that church happens to be a small rural church, as the one I am serving now happens to be. Recently, I suggested to my board of trustees that it might be desirable to hold one service on Sunday instead of having two relatively poorly attended ones. Two of them objected. I asked them whether, if I kept on with the evening services they would promise to be present. They frankly said, 'No, we will not even promise to be present in the morning.' I replied, 'What if I should stay away once in a while?' 'Oh, that is different. That is your business.' That is just the point. It is regarded as the preacher's business. He is running a kind of mill. They may drop in now and then as it pleases them. They will come to the special service. The minister must be there, it matters not whether he has an audience to hear him or a congregation to add fervor to his preaching or to the worship. Men forget, in criticizing ministers about their preaching, that preaching itself is a co-operative enterprise. It is, as Gladstone said about eloquence, produced only where the audience sends back as rain what the speaker presents them as a mist."

There is, it seems to us, some truth expressed in this excerpt, which deserves more than a passing thought. All the responsibility for non-attendance at church does not rest upon the clergy. It is a fact that many people in our day do not go to church because they do not want to be disturbed in their spiritual slumber. They do not want to be persuaded to repent of their pet sins or to apply the teachings of Jesus to every-day life, including business, politics, and social affairs. They love darkness and wickedness more than righteousness and light. They rebel against divine authority, and prefer ministers whom they can criticize and ignore, flatter and praise, as fancy may happen to dictate.

Here again the Latter-day Saints occupy a different position. They go to church, not for the sake of any particular preacher, but in order to worship God in song and prayer, and to renew their allegiance to their Lord and Savior, by partaking of the Sacrament. They come to be edified by each other, as the Spirit may direct, through those who preside. They know that it is their duty to bring to the meeting their portion of that which edifies the body of Christ, and they never attend a worshiping gathering in vain. They find sermons in stones, in flowers, in the waves of the sea, in the stars that twinkle at night, and they

hear the voice of God in every honest testimony by their brethren or sisters, speaking under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

Is the world suffering from many ills? In the gospel there is a remedy for them all, for the gospel is "the power of God unto salvation."

J. M. S.

CROSSING THE BRIDGE.

On a bridge which spans a wide river, railway trains, tram-cars, horse-drawn carriages, and travelers afoot are crossing. Individuals may walk upon any part of the structure, but they are advised, by conspicuous notices, of the danger of treading anywhere except upon the pathway set aside for pedestrians. No policeman is stationed to prevent men and women from straying upon those parts of the bridge where they might be killed, or crippled, by revolving wheels or by the feet of horses. A silent warning is given, but no compulsion is exercised. All who are about to pass over are left free to decide for themselves whether they will take the way of safety or select the dangerous thoroughfare.

Mortal life is a bridge on which human feet are crossing from the land of Pre-existence to the region of the Hereafter. There is a strip of safety upon that bridge, but there are also many lanes of danger. Signs of warning appear; but no one is on hand to enforce compliance with traffic regulations. Christ's Church is the avenue of security; His gospel is the cautioning placard.

Those who are now treading the safe road are under obligation to invite the travelers in the zones of peril to abandon their hazardous surroundings and join the protected throng. Coercion can not be employed, for the free-agency of the individual must be recognized; but admonitions can be given, and sometimes persuasion may be used.

On Life's Bridge no one can linger or retrace his steps. Each must move forward.

It is better to enter the Eternity Beyond, with spirit erect and unmaimed, than to leave the Bridge as one who has been completely crushed by the wheels of earthly wickedness, or grievously injured by the traffic of worldly sin.

Liverpool. J. E. C.

EAT LESS BREAD

—BY REQUEST OF THE FOOD CONTROLLER.

RELIGION AND CIVILIZATION.

THE subjoined letter has been received from Elder Robert L. Dunn, who, before he left for service at the front, was the president of the Kidderminster branch of the Church:

"A few days ago I was sitting in a café and heard some men discuss religion, and a remark made by one of them gave me a subject for this letter. 'Religion,' he said, 'is only superstition. There is no real religion except civilization.'

"This statement is ringing in my ears, 'There is no real religion except civilization.' If that were true, then the booming and roaring of the guns, which I can hear continually, would seem to force us to accept the hopeless view of Ingersoll, that life is a narrow vale between the cold peaks of two eternities. But for my part, I prefer the inspiring optimism of the poet—or shall I say prophet?—who said,

> "Life is real, life is earnest,'
> And the grave is not its goal;
> 'Dust thou art, to dust returnest,'
> Was not spoken of the soul."

"Let the infidel cling to his creed, if he will: it is fitting for him. But because his own life seems to be a narrow vale, let him not conclude that it is so for every one of us. Because he is an agnostic—one who does *not know*—he should not assume that no one else knows. If the cramped and warped mind of the unbeliever cannot grasp the higher and real meaning of life, let him refrain from betraying his ignorance, as did the little sparrow who insisted that the drain pipe, where he was hatched out, was the world. For the man of spiritual understanding and prophetic vision, life is indeed real and earnest; not a narrow vale, but rather a vast field where knowledge may be gathered by the wise, though often weary traveler.

"Here is a school of experience where men may learn primary lessons, which shall fit them to learn the greater lessons of eternity. Religion, as I take it, means the whole spiritual understanding of mankind, both collective and individual.

"It may often have superstition mixed with it, but that does not signify that it is *all* superstition. There are errors of belief and mistaken expressions of belief, but that does not prove that truth does not exist, or that it is not understood and accepted. The example of some nations goes to show that civilization is often only another and more terrible form of savagery.

"Our friend said, 'There is no real religion except civilization,' but I would say, 'There is no real civilization without religion.' Without the good influence, the inspiration of religion, there can be no good or desirable civilization.

"What avenues of thought our friend's remark has opened up!

Yet, to-day we may not follow them farther, but we may gather strength and comfort from such conclusions as we have reached, and take opportunites of gathering drops from the fountain of Truth."

DIED IN THE SERVICE.

WORD has just been received from President George Brooks, Jr., of the Irish conference, of the death of Brother Benjamin Lawrence Birchall, son of President Benjamin R. Birchall, of the Dublin branch of the Church. He was wounded at the front on the 10th of May, 1917, and died the following day in the hospital. He was born at Nephi, Utah, on the 17th of April, 1894, and came to England with his parents in November, 1895. He was baptized at Manchester on the 19th of April, 1902, and confirmed the same day by Elder Jesse H. Argyle. The priesthood was conferred upon Brother Birchall on January 15th, 1911, by Elder Richard W. Young, Jr. He was ordained to the office of priest, May 3rd, 1914, by Elder Clyde H. Bennion.

President Benjamin R. Birchall writes:

"We feel that our son, in passing away, has laid down his life for liberty and freedom, and, as these are closely akin to righteousness, he died in a noble cause.

"Our darling boy yielded his young life in the titanic struggle against an Influence that might have crushed the world, as it did poor Belgium. He has done his share in making that brutal intention impossible to carry out, and his noble mother has also done her share in the sacrifice of her firstborn. Her pride is in being the mother of a man—a man in deed, if not fully in years. The cross is heavy, but we accept it. It is a call from God. We humbly submit and say, 'Thy will be done.' He knows best.

"Our son enlisted in the army in February, 1915, and left for France in September, the same year; he has not been home since. He was a signaller and gunner in the Royal Field Artillery.

"In all his letters there was a ring of gospel fervor. He wrote his last letter two days before he was wounded, to one of the sisters in the Manchester conference, and expressed a strong desire to attend the conference there on the 27th of May, this year.

"Our home suffers an irreparable loss, but 'behind the veil' there enters another worker for the redemption of the dead.

"We have received an expression of the sympathy of the King and the Queen, in the loss we have sustained, but the eternal message of the great King of kings is more to us, for He has said, 'Mourn not the dead.'"

"NOTHING is more certain to make a fluent and ready speaker than the analytic examination of the revealed Word."—DR. SHEDD.

FROM SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE.

It is my desire to express my feelings and to bear my humble testimony to the divinity of the gospel that is being preached in this last dispensation by God's servants who have the authority to do so. As I am a soldier out in France, I am surrounded by wickedness; yet, I feel sorry in my heart for those who are wicked. I am thankful to know that I belong to the Church of God. With His help I shall always try and show to my comrades the light that I have. I am happy to have a knowledge of this latter-day work, for I know that God is watching over us and will protect us.

I might say that while I have been out here I have had the privilege of speaking in a religious meeting. I was called upon by my officer to speak to my comrades. It was a surprise to me, and and I felt very weak; but I relied upon the Spirit of God, and He put words into my mouth. I knew that of myself I could not say anything. I feel to thank my Father in heaven for this opportunity, and that I had the strength to proclaim the gospel of Christ. It is my desire to help this work along.

I have been a member of the Church for ten years, and my testimony grows stronger. I also know that this is the true gospel of Christ, and that Joseph Smith was a true prophet, and that by living up to the light we have we receive great blessings.

I have been thinking of the Sermon on the Mount. How beautiful it is, and how much we can learn by reading it! God has blessed me while I have been out here. The life of a soldier is a hard one, and we need the prayers of all the saints. It is the duty of every Latter-day Saint to obey the twelfth article of our faith, which says, "We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers and magistrates, in obeying honoring and sustaining the law." It is our duty to help our country, and not to hang back. Think of those who have suffered. Let us remember that the power of God is greater than that of men.

Somewhere in France. Private G. Smith.

FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

Transfer.—Elder Stephen H. Winter was transferred from the Sheffield to the Bristol conference, May 22nd, 1917.

Change of Address.—The address of the headquarters of the Bristol conference has been changed to 17, Grosvenor Street, Canton, Cardiff, Wales.

Baptisms.—On Sunday, June 3rd, 1917, Elders Vincent Shepherd and Evan O. Perkins baptized six persons in the North Sea at Sunderland (Newcastle conference). All were on the same day

confirmed by the above-mentioned elders and President Parley M. Condie. A large number of persons gathered round and witnessed the ceremony, and to those assembled tracts were distributed after the service.

On Thursday, May 31st, 1917, a baptismal service was held at Stamshaw, Portsmouth (London conference), when three candidates were received into the Church. President J. R. B. Prior (local), of the Portsmouth branch, conducted the services. Elder George T. Long and Author S. S. Bulstrode (locals) officiated. The new members were confirmed by Elders J. R. B. Prior and George T. Long.

On Sunday, June 3rd, 1917, a baptismal service was held at "Deseret," 152 High Road, South Tottenham, London, N. 15 (London conference), when one candidate was baptized by Elder Arnold G. Holland. The new member was confirmed at the fast meeting by President James Gunn McKay.

DIED.

LEE.—At Loughborough (Nottingham conference), on April 22nd, 1917, Gladys, the infant daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Lee. Deceased was born May 9th, 1916, and was blessed February 16th, 1917.

ELLARD.—At Derby (Nottingham conference), on the 26th of May, 1917, Sister Sophia Ellard. Deceased was born at Sandiacre, Nottingham. She was baptized on the 5th of March, 1910, at Derby, by Elder Daniel W. Grover. For some years she has been confined to her bed, on account of sickness, but through all her sufferings she has retained her testimony of the truth of the gospel.

SMITH.—At Woodseats Cottage, Charlesworth, Derbyshire (Manchester conference), on May 19th, 1917, Brother Jesse Smith. Deceased was born June 29th, 1874, at Garsley Brow, Cheshire, and was baptized and confirmed on the 22nd of February, 1902, by Elder Joseph D. Harker. He went into his garden to work, and was found dead a short time afterwards. He held the priesthood of an elder, and was a faithful member of the Church. The funeral services took place on the 23rd of May, 1917, and the grave was dedicated by President Wilford F. Burton.

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